Students planning to enroll in Accelerated English I for their freshman year are required to read Edith Hamilton’s *Mythology* during the summer. Please note that the Constitution of the State of California requires that we provide a public education to you free of charge. Your right to a free education is for all school/educational activities, whether curricular or extracurricular, and whether you get a grade for the activity or class. Subject to certain exceptions, your right to a free public education means that we cannot require you or your family to purchase materials, supplies, equipment or uniforms for any school activity, nor can we require you or your family to pay security deposits for access, participation, materials, or equipment. This text is available at San Clemente High School Library, Village Bookstore in San Clemente, and Mathom House Books, Inc. in the Pico Plaza, both of which offer students with ID’s a 10% discount. Used and new copies are also available on-line, and in other book stores. It is not available as an audio book, but some **optional, related texts** are available through sites such as audible.com and theaudiobookstore.com. Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Davis’ *Don’t Know Much about Mythology*, Bullfinch’s *Mythology*, and Green’s *Tales of the Greek Heroes* can provide **additional support** during students’ reading of *Mythology*. Study and save the following visual and background notes as an introduction to your study of Greek mythology. Please place it in your fall English folder, along with the pronunciation guide.
Key Values—Watch for the following lessons in the stories and note examples in the margins.

1. Freedom to Think:
The Greeks favored philosophical discourse over doctrine. They created no sacred texts or codes, valuing dynamic religion and laws instead.

2. The Concrete:
Ancient Greeks valued the realistic and tangible above the spiritual. Their view of the world was rational and matter-of-fact.

3. Fulfillment of Potential—Physically, Intellectually, Morally, Artistically:
The Greeks believed in the motto “be all that you can be.” “Know Thyself” is inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi (a major oracle center). “Experience the world in order to know yourself” was a major tenet of the Greek culture.

4. Self-Restraint—the “Golden Mean”:
The Greeks also believed that excessive pride (hubris) incurs the gods’ jealousy and wrath. As a warning, “nothing to excess,” or moderation in all things, is inscribed at Delphi. (Watch for this lesson in the myth of Daedalus and Icarus.)

5. Humanism:
Ancient Greek art, philosophy, and religion centers on the splendor of the human spirit. Gods are humanized, anthropomorphic, and superior to man—not morally, ethically, or spiritually, but in the concrete qualities of power, beauty, and immortality. Man is the center, not the gods.

6. Ethnic pride in Cultural Accomplishments:
Think of My Big, Fat, Greek Wedding if you’ve seen it. 😊

7. Hospitality:
The Greeks believed that Zeus protected strangers (“Zeus of the stranger”) and “suppliants,” those dependent on the protection of another or those who addressed heart-felt requests to another. They sought to please the god by offering “extreme hospitality” to anyone in need. Watch for components of the guest-host code.

Reasons for Studying Mythology:
Ancient Greek stories and images are a major source of literature and art in the western world. During the European Renaissance (beginning around 1450 A.D.), philosophers looked back to Greece and Rome for inspiration.

*Start watching for and gathering allusions/references to Greek stories and characters in everything from literature and art to ads and video games.

Our culture inherited foundational principles from the Greeks in the following areas:
- Government—Democracy as a basic principle
- Drama—form and inspiration
- Science
- Medicine
- Olympic Games
- Classical style architecture and sculpture (temples, column styles). Have you seen the U.S. Supreme Court building in Washington, D.C.?

*Plan a family trip to the Getty Villa (this is different from the Getty Museum). You may earn extra credit for going during the summer or 1st semester! See http://www.getty.edu/visit/ (right-hand side) Free admission! Take notes!

They usually show a play there in September! Attending that is another XC option, but you do have to buy a ticket for that!

Ancient Greek Religion and Beliefs (Note these in the stories.)
- Ancient Greece was a pagan, polytheistic society.
- Categories of Divine Beings—(Note the characteristics of each “type” of creature in the stories.)
- 12 most important gods/goddesses—the Olympians
- Disruptive deities:
  - satyrs: ½ goat, ½ man, characterized by wine and lust
  - nymphs: spirits of nature, depicted as beautiful maidens
  - centaurs: ½ horse, ½ man, savage, threatening, wild, representing uncontrolled aggression
- People were expected to honor the gods in order to thank them for blessings received, to receive blessings in return, and to avoid punishment.
- The gods did not love men, but they protected men; they also protected the states that honored them.
• The Greek myths—tales of monsters, family tragedy, and divine love affairs—were not a written code like the Bible, but all myths were respected as lessons about the gods’ awesome might, their mystery, and the instability of human life.
• Worshippers went to oracles for more direct information from the gods. Priests relayed a god’s message, and seers told prophecies. Even from beyond Greek city-states, people flocked to major oracles like Delphi. Their questions were answered in riddles because the gods were too complex to offer a clear reply to mere mortals.

Assigned Reading & Study Questions

***Important Directions. Read Carefully and Follow Exactly***

Below are study questions to focus your reading of the tales. Please type your responses in complete, detailed sentences. (Do not type or cut/paste the question). Be as specific as you can. When school starts, your responses will be submitted to an anti-plagiarism website, so do your own thinking! You may not share answers or collaborate with other students. *These answers are due the first day of school. They should be neatly typed, and include your name (typed!) and the name of your middle school.

Before reading, please print out the “pronunciation guide” from the following site to help with the names: [http://www.pantheon.org/miscellaneous/pronunciations.html](http://www.pantheon.org/miscellaneous/pronunciations.html) Please place this guide in your English notebook for the semester.

Read the following chapters from *Mythology* by Edith Hamilton:
Part I, All (chapters 1-IV, The Gods-The Earliest Heroes, but skip Polyphemus section)
Part II, Chapters I Cupid & Psyche, II Eight Brief Tales, IV Four Great Adventures
Part V, Chapter 17 House of Atreus
Part VI, Chapters 20 Midas—and Others & 21 Brief Myths

Be prepared for a test on all of the above chapters the first week of school. Quizlet is often a helpful resource in preparing for a quiz.

Part I: Chapter 1: The Gods
1. Which of the key values from page 2 of this hand-out are expressed in this chapter and how? Give specific examples and explain how they exemplify that key value.
2. With which Greek god do you most identify/relate? Why? Cite a specific example of the god/goddess demonstrating the trait/s that you believe you also possess and give an example of how you demonstrate the same trait.
3. The myths are full of instances of the gods’ cruelty. Giving multiple examples, argue whether it’s ever justified, and what the gods’ cruelty says about the Greeks’ view of the universe.
4. Who/what were the “Graces,” and what does “grace” mean to us today? Do we value it in our culture? Support your answer.

Chapter 2: The Two Great Gods of Earth
5. What does the “Rape [Abduction] of Persephone” attempt to explain about nature? Explain.
6. With specific references to the myth, explain how Dionysus is a symbol of resurrection.
7. Why does Dionysus have both a good and an evil side to his personality? What does his persona reveal about the Greek attitude toward wine?

Chapter 3: How the World and Mankind Were Created
8. Why does Father Heaven imprison his children? Which Greek value from page 2 does this connect with? Explain.
9. Explain the Greeks’ “metals” creation story. What does it explain? Why do you think the Golden Race had to end?
10. Both the Bronze race and the age of heroes are warlike. Why do you think Hesiod (Hamilton’s source) prefers the heroic age? (Note their different afterlives.) Most modern historians would see the movement from bronze tools to iron ones as a technological advance. Similarly, the domestication of fire is considered an advance. Why do you suppose Hesiod doesn’t see these changes as advances?

11. In what ways do you think the meanings of the Five Ages story and the Prometheus-Pandora stories are similar/different?

12. Taken together, what do you think the sequence of myths in Hesiod--Prometheus, sacrifice, theft of fire, creation of woman, Prometheus' punishment, and the five ages of man--say about the relations between men and gods? What do you think is Hesiod's (Hamilton’s source) moral/message/theme?

13. Who is Pandora’s counterpart in the Jewish and Christian faiths? Explain the connections.

14. How did the ancient Greek culture seem to view women? Support your answer.

15. Why do you think Hope remains in the jar? Is that good or bad? (Remember that the Greeks stored their food--grains, olives, wine, etc. in large jars just like the one Pandora opened.)

16. How are Deucalion and Pyrrha like the biblical Noah and his wife? Explain the lesson of this myth.

Chapter 4: The Earliest Heroes
17. Which purpose of mythology (page 1 of hand-out) do the flower myths serve? Explain.

18. What is the common theme (message about life) of all the flower myths?

Part II: Chapter 5: Cupid and Psyche
19. How are Pandora and Psyche similar? What do their stories reveal about the ancient Greek view of women? Explain.

Chapter 6: Eight Brief Tales of Lovers
20. Do you find Pyramus and Thisbe admirable or foolish? Justify your opinion. (Shakespeare’s play Romeo and Juliet uses the myth of Pyramus and Thisbe as one of its influences.)

21. After reading the ancient Greek tales of lovers, comment on the ancient Greek attitude toward romantic love. Did the Greeks believe that romantic love was a gift, a burden, a necessity? Explain and use two myths to justify your answer.

Note: George Bernard Shaw’s play Pygmalion is based on the Greek myth of Pygmalion.

Chapter 8: Four Great Adventures
22. Explain the virtue that is taught and how it reveals itself in the myth Daedalus and Icarus.

23. Considering the degree of danger involved in Phaeton’s request of his father, Apollo, why does Apollo have to allow it? What does this teach us about the Greek culture?

Part V: Chapter 17: The House of Atreus
24. How does Tantalus draw down the curse on the House of Atreus? Why does he commit such a heinous act?

25. Explain how and why Niobe’s fourteen children are killed. Include the fatal error attributed to Niobe.


Part VI: Chapter 20
27. What moral lesson does the myth of Midas teach?

28. What does the expression “don’t kill the messenger” mean, and how does it apply to this myth?

29. Who punishes Scylla? How and why? Is this fair?

30. Look up the definitions of the words “glaucoma” and “glaucous.” What is the connection between the character Glaucus and words such as “glaucoma” or “glaucous gull”?

Part VI: Chapter 21
31. What two purposes does the myth of Arachne serve (see background)?
32. How does the adjective “sisyphean” relate to the myth of Sisyphus? Use the adjective “sisyphean” in an original sentence.
   Note: Shakespeare’s play *Much Ado about Nothing* includes a character named Hero who takes after the mythological Hero in the version Hamilton includes.
33. What was Orion’s offense? What is the connection between Orion and astronomy?

34. Record an insightful question you have about a myth, or an idea that was not answered in this book.
35. Based on your reading, describe the ancient Greeks’ view of fate. Give at least two specific examples from the myths. How do you think most people view the concept of fate today? What do you think?
36. Look at the picture on page 3 (approximately) of the introduction to Hamilton’s *Mythology*. Explain what it depicts about how the Greeks viewed their gods in contrast with how earlier cultures viewed themselves in relation to the gods. What is important about this change (read the next couple of pages following the image for ideas)?
37. Which examples of how the Greeks personified abstract or natural qualities/aspects are most memorable to you?