

Mythology by Edith Hamilton: Reading Guide

Use these questions to think about your summer reading and prepare for a quiz on the book.

1. What character traits were most admired by the Greeks? Read Colossians 2: 1-11, I Corinthians 13: 4-7, and Galatians 5: 13- 26. How does God's ideal compare with the Greeks ideal?
2. Why might hospitality have been so important to the Greeks? Think about what you may know of their world – trade, location, travel, etc. What was your favorite story from Mythology that communicated this value? Do you know of a story from another culture that teaches the value of hospitality? Why might stories be used to teach important values?
3. The Bible and Greek mythology have very different views of women and their value. Look at the story of Pandora on p.74 of Mythology, particularly the first story about her. Also read Genesis 2: 15-23. Why was Pandora created? Why was Eve created?
4. Which trait is most frequently punished by the gods? Look at the story of Pegasus and Bellerophon. What does God say about this trait?
5. Much of ancient mythology is meant to give creative explanations for things seen in nature. Describe a story or character in the book that does this.
6. In literature, stories are often recycled, using a well-known plot line in a new way, perhaps with a modern setting or new characters. This is frequently done in movies as well. Look at the popular story of Pyramus and Thisbe. What well-known literary tale appears to have been modeled on this plot?
7. Our founding fathers, leaders of the Revolution in the eighteenth century were well- versed in the literature and history of the ancient world. Look at the story of The Seven Against Thebes, particularly Theseus' confrontation with the herald. How does the Athenian view of government compare with American government and ideals?
8. Hercules and Theseus were favorite heroes of Greece and Athens. Each had flaws and strengths. Which hero might be preferred in America? Which hero would you prefer, and why? What roles did Hera and Aphrodite play in the tragedies of their lives? How do these goddesses contrast with our God?
9. Ms. Hamilton notes that in the late 5th century B.C., the same time that logic, reason, and deduction were becoming more important through the works of Socrates, Plato and others, the myths began to lose their importance. Why might this be?