

Bulfinch's Mythology Study Guide

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

1. Why does Bulfinch say knowledge of mythology is critical?
2. What is an allusion?
3. From where do the legends in "Stories of Gods and Heroes" come?
4. For whom did Bulfinch write this book?

CHAPTER I – STORIES OF GODS AND HEROES

INTRODUCTION

1. Is the ancient Greek religion still alive today?
2. How did the Greeks picture their world? In detail, describe or draw and label it.
3. What is another name for Greece?
4. What are two other names for the Elysian Plain?
5. What happened at the Elysian Plain?
6. Where did the gods live?
7. What did Vulcan (Hephaestus) do?
8. List the Titans.
9. Describe how Jupiter (Zeus) dethroned Saturn (Chronos).
10. How were the heavens, ocean, and realms of the dead divided?
11. Describe, and list the parentage of, each of the following (refer to this list whenever you get confused):
 - a. Jupiter/Jove (Zeus)
 - b. Juno (Hera)
 - c. Vulcan (Hephaestus)
 - d. Mars (Ares)
 - e. Phoebus Apollo
 - f. Diana (Artemis)
 - g. Venus (Aphrodite)
 - h. Cupid (Eros)
 - i. Minerva (Pallas, Athene)
 - j. Mercury (Hermes)
 - k. Ceres (Demeter)
 - l. Proserpine (Persephone)
 - m. Bacchus (Dionysus)
 - n. Muses
 - o. Graces
 - p. Fates
 - q. Furies
 - r. Satyrs
12. Who supposedly fled to Italy and reigned during a "Golden Age"?
13. What did the Romans believe about "Genius" and "Juno"?

CHAPTER II: PROMETHEUS AND PANDORA

1. According to the Greeks, the world began from what?
2. Did the Greeks say which god arranged the earth?
3. Who formed man from earth and water?
4. What qualities did he give to man and why?
5. Who was Prometheus?
6. What was so significant about the gift of fire?
7. Who was Pandora? Why was she made?
8. Compare and contrast Epimetheus' jar and Pandora's box.
9. List and briefly describe the ages of man.
10. What did Jupiter (Zeus) do to rid the earth of evil people?
11. Which two humans were spared?
12. How did they repopulate the earth?
13. How was Prometheus ultimately punished by Jupiter (Zeus)?
14. What did Prometheus need to do in order to be freed?
15. Did he ever become free? Why or why not?

PYRAMUS AND THISBE

1. Why couldn't Pyramus and Thisbe get married?
2. How did they converse?
3. Where were they going to meet to run away?
4. What was the misunderstanding at the spring?
5. What was Pyramus' response to the misunderstanding?
6. What was Thisbe's reaction to Pyramus' response?
7. What happened to the white mulberry tree?
8. What Shakespearean play has a comedic interlude of this story?

CHAPTER IV - IO

1. What form did Jupiter (Zeus) use to disguise Io from Juno (Hera)?
2. How did Juno (Hera) come to possess Io?

3. How did Io reveal herself to her father?
4. How did Mercury (Hermes) trick Argus?
5. How did Juno (Hera) punish Argus?
6. Why did Juno (Hera) consent to restore Io's previous form?

DIANA

7. What was Actaeon doing in the woods?
8. Describe or draw and label the place Diana would go when weary.
9. What happened while Diana was bathing?
10. How did she punish Actaeon?
11. What happened when Actaeon's dogs saw his new form?

CHAPTER V - PHAETON

1. Who were Phaeton's parents?
2. What did a schoolfellow do to upset Phaeton?
3. How did his mother tell him to resolve his anger?
4. Where was the palace of the Sun located?
5. What did Apollo confirm for Phaeton?
6. For what did Phaeton ask Apollo?
7. What was Apollo's response? Why?
8. Why did Apollo ultimately give permission?
9. Why did the horses rush forward?
10. What happened to the earth during Phaeton's ride?
11. What was Jupiter's (Zeus) response when he saw what happened?
12. What was Phaeton's ultimate fate?

CHAPTER VI - MIDAS

1. Who was Silenus and why was he taken to Midas?
2. What did Bacchus give to Midas as a reward for returning Silenus?
3. What were the positive and negative benefits of the gift?
4. How did Midas get rid of his affliction?
5. Who did Midas then start to worship?
6. To what contest did Pan challenge Apollo and who won?
7. How did Midas react to the outcome?
8. What was his punishment?
9. What is a Gordian knot?
10. How did Alexander the Great manage to "untie" the knot?

CHAPTER VII - PROSERPINE

1. Describe how volcanos were created.
2. When Pluto (Hades) was surveying the damage, what did Cupid (Eros) do? Why?
3. With whom did Pluto (Hades) fall in love?
4. What did he do to her?
5. What was the result of Ceres' (Demeter) search?
6. Who comforted Ceres (Demeter) and how?
7. How was Ceres (Demeter) going to reward Metanira's son? Why did it upset Metanira?
8. When Ceres (Demeter) found Proserpine's (Persephone) girdle, how did she punish the earth?
9. Who interceded on earth's behalf?
10. What had Proserpine (Persephone) become?
11. Jupiter/Jove (Zeus) agreed to help Proserpine (Persephone) be released if she did not do what?
12. What prevented her complete release?
13. What element of nature does this story explain?

CHAPTER VIII - VENUS AND ADONIS

1. Why did Venus (Aphrodite) fall in love with Adonis?
2. Of what did she warn Adonis?
3. How was Adonis' memory preserved?

APOLLO AND HYACINTHUS

4. What happened when Apollo and Hyacinthus were playing with the discus?
5. How did Apollo feel about what happened?
6. How was Hyacinthus' memory preserved?

CHAPTER XI - CUPID AND PSYCHE

1. Why was Venus (Aphrodite) jealous of Psyche?
2. What did Venus (Aphrodite) do to Cupid (Eros)?
3. How did the invisible Cupid (Eros) fall in love with Psyche?
4. What did Apollo's Oracle tell Psyche's parents?
5. What was Psyche's response to the news?
6. Describe or draw and label what Psyche found in the grove of trees.
7. What was the response when Psyche asked to see her future husband?
8. When they visited her, Psyche's sisters convinced her to do what?
9. What happened when she followed their advice?
10. What did her foolish sisters do to try to win Cupid? What was their fate?
11. Why did Ceres (Demeter) help Psyche and what was her advice?
12. Summarize Psyche's tasks and how she accomplished each.
13. What happened when she opened the box?
14. How did Cupid and Psyche eventually end up married?
15. Define allegory. How is this story allegorical?

CHAPTER XIII - ECHO AND NARCISSUS

1. What kind of creature was Echo and what was her one flaw?
2. How did Echo anger Juno (Hera)?
3. What was Echo's punishment?
4. Who did Echo love?
5. Why didn't he love her back?
6. How did Narcissus treat the nymphs that loved him?
7. How and why did Narcissus die?
8. How is Narcissus' memory preserved?

CHAPTER XIV - MINERVA

1. Who was Minerva's (Pallas, Athene) father and how was she born?
2. Describe Minerva (Pallas, Athene).
3. Describe the contest between Minerva and Neptune.
4. At what task was Arachne particularly skilled?
5. What contest did Arachne enter into with Minerva (Pallas, Athene).
6. What was in Minerva's design?
7. What was in Arachne's design?
8. How did Arachne end up as a spider?

CHAPTER XV

PERSEUS AND MEDUSA

1. Who were Perseus' parents?
2. Why were Perseus and Danae put into a chest and set adrift?
3. How did Perseus come to be sent to conquer Medusa?
4. What was Medusa punished?
5. What happened when a living creature looked at her?
6. With what was Perseus armed?
7. How did Perseus succeed in slaying Medusa?

PERSEUS AND ATLAS

8. Describe Atlas.
9. Of what was Atlas proud?
10. What did Atlas fear Perseus would steal?
11. How was Atlas punished?
12. What does Atlas hold on his shoulders?

CHAPTER XVI - MONSTERS: GIANTS

1. Define a mythological "monster."
2. Describe the three general categories of monster.
3. To where did the Olympian gods flee and how (specifically) did each hide when they left Greece?

THE SPHINX

4. Why did Laius abandon his son?
5. How did Oedipus get his name?

6. What happened to Laius
7. Describe or draw and label the sphinx.
8. What were the sphinx's riddle and its answer?
9. Who did Oedipus unwittingly marry?
10. When Oedipus found out what he had done, what did he do?

PEGASUS AND THE CHIMAERA

11. How was Pegasus formed?
12. Describe or draw and label the Chimaera.
13. How was Bellerophon able to conquer the Chimaera?

THE CENTAURS, THE PYGMIES, AND THE GRIFFIN

14. Describe or draw and label the centaurs.
15. Who was Chiron?
16. Describe the pygmies.
17. Describe or draw and label the griffin.

CHAPTER XVII - THE GOLDEN FLEECE

1. How did Nephele get the Golden Fleece?
2. What happened to Helle?
3. Where did Phyrxus end up?
4. What did Phyrxus do with the ram?
5. What was the condition under which Pelias received Aeson's kingdom?
6. What happened when Jason demanded the crown?
7. How did Pelias get rid of Jason?
8. Who were the Argonauts?
9. What tasks did Jason have to perform to win the fleece?
10. Is the story of Jason true? Explain.
11. What did Jason want Medea to do for his father?
12. How did Medea make Aeson younger?
13. Who else was Medea asked to make younger?
14. How was the spell different the second time?
15. In what Shakespearean play does he recall Medea's incantations?

CHAPTER XVIII - MELEAGER AND ATALANTA

1. Who is Meleager?
2. Why is a boar laying waste to Calydon?
3. List the members of the Calydonian boar hunt.
4. Who was Atalanta?
5. Who kills the boar and how?
6. Why did Meleager kill Plexippus?
7. How did Meleager die?

ATALANTA

8. What fortune did Atalanta hear?
9. How could suitors win her hand? What was the risk if they failed?
10. What was Hippomenes' role in the race supposed to be?
11. What did his role become?
12. Who did Hippomenes ask for help?
13. How did Hippomenes win the race?
14. What did Atalanta and Hippomenes for get to do and what was the consequence?

CHAPTER XIX - HERCULES

1. How did Juno (Hera) try to hurt Hercules? Why?
2. What was the result?
3. List and briefly explain the 12 labors of Hercules.
4. Why did Hercules kill Iphitus?
5. What was his punishment?
6. How did Hercules die?
7. How did he end up immortal?

CHAPTER XX - THESEUS

1. Who was Theseus?

2. Where was brought up, and what did he do when he reached manhood?
3. What did he encounter on his trip to Athens?
4. Who filled his father's mind with suspicion?
5. What is a Minotaur? Where did it live?
6. How did Theseus defeat the Minotaur?

OLYMPICS

7. Who founded the Olympics?
8. How often were they held?
9. When was the first Olympiad?
10. What events were held?

DAEDALUS

11. For whom did Daedalus create the labyrinth?
12. What happened when he lost the king's favor?
13. Why was it difficult to escape? How did he overcome this problem?
14. What warning did Daedalus give Icarus?
15. What happened when Icarus didn't heed the warning?
16. What two tools did Perdix create?
17. What was Daedalus' response to the ingenuity?
18. What did Minerva (Pallas, Athene) do to save Perdix?

CHAPTER XXI - BACCHUS

1. How did Juno (Hera) trick Semele?
2. To whom did Juno (Hera) give Bacchus?
3. With what form of "worship" did Bacchus become familiar?
4. Summarize how the worship of Bacchus was established in Greece.
5. Explain Ariadne's crown.

CHAPTER XXII – PAN

1. Describe or draw and label Pan.
2. How did we get the term "panic"?
3. What does Pan's name signify? Of what is he a symbol?
4. Define each type of nymph.

We will study the Trojan War and *The Odyssey* during the school year. In addition, we will refer to other stories in the book as we study other novels that allude to the mythology contained in here.