

SHORT ANSWER STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS **ANSWER KEY** *Mythology*

Part Three *The Great Heroes Before the Trojan War*

Chapter 9 *Perseus* Chapter 10 *Theseus* Chapter 11 *Hercules* Chapter 12 *Atalanta*

1. What was the Medusa, and how did Perseus kill it?
Medusa was a Gorgon, with hair made of snakes. Anyone who looked at her would turn to stone. Perseus was helped by Athena and Hermes. He used Hermes's sword and Athena's shield. He looked into the shield at Medusa's reflection and cut off her head.
2. How did Perseus kill his grandfather?
He threw a discus that accidentally swerved and killed his grandfather.
3. Theseus was raised in a city away from his father, King Aegeus of Athens. How did the King know that Theseus was his son when they finally met?
Aegeus had placed a sword and a pair of shoes in a hollow below a great stone. He told his wife that when the boy was strong enough to get the items, he should come with them to Athens. Theseus did this, and Aegeus recognized Theseus as his son.
4. What was the Minotaur, and how did Theseus kill it?
The Minotaur was half bull, half human, the son of King Minos of Crete. It lived in the Labyrinth made by Daedalus. Every nine years fourteen young Athenians were sacrificed to it. Theseus volunteered to be sacrificed. The King's daughter, Ariadne, gave him a ball of thread which he unwound as he went through the Labyrinth. He killed the Minotaur with his bare hands and followed the string out of the Labyrinth.
5. How did Theseus change the government when he became King of Athens?
He established a government by the people, where all were equal. He organized a commonwealth, resigned the throne, and became the Commander in Chief. Athens became the only really free state in the world at that time.
6. Who was the strongest man on earth, and the great hero of the rest of Greece (except Athens?)
This was Hercules. He was the son of Zeus and Alcmena, a mortal.
7. Why did Hercules perform his twelve labors?
Hera had made him mad. He killed his wife and children. When he came out of his madness he wanted to do penance for his deeds. His cousin, King Eurystheus, gave him the twelve labors.
8. Briefly describe each of the twelve labors of Hercules.
 - 1) He killed the lion of Nemea by choking it.
 - 2) He killed the nine-headed Hydra.
 - 3) He brought back alive a stag with golden horns.
 - 4) He captured a great boar.

- 5) He cleaned the very dirty Augean stables by diverting two rivers and making them flood the stables.
- 6) He shot the birds that plagued the people of Stymphalus.
- 7) He took a bull that belonged to Minos of Crete.
- 8) He killed King Diomedes, and took his man-eating mare.
- 9) He stole the girdle of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. He killed her in the process.
- 10) He brought back the cattle of Geryon.
- 11) He brought back the Golden Apples of the Hesperides. He held the vault of heaven for Atlas so that Atlas could find the apples for him. Then he tricked Atlas into taking the heavens back onto his own shoulders.
- 12) He went to the underworld and freed Theseus from the Chair of Forgetfulness.

9. Whom did Atalanta tell her father she would marry?

She said she would marry the man who could beat her in a foot race.

10. Whom did Atalanta marry, and how did he win her?

His name was either Melanion or Hippomenes. Aphrodite gave him three irresistible golden apples. During the race, he threw them, one at a time, near Atalanta. She stopped to get each of them and he beat her to the finish line.