



THE LIGHTNING THIEF:

Pre-Reading Activity

The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan tells the story of twelve-year-old Percy Jackson, who finds out he's a demigod and then embarks on a dangerous quest to retrieve a stolen lightning bolt. Before you enter Percy's world of Greek gods, monsters, and adventures, review some key terms and reflect on what you already know.

VOCABULARY

Review the meaning of the following Greek mythology terms.

- **hero:** a person who accomplishes great feats or makes brave sacrifices on behalf of others; a child of a god and a mortal
- **myth:** an ancient, traditional story that explains a natural phenomenon or teaches an important lesson
- **quest:** a daring journey taken in order to complete a task



BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Record what you know about some of Greek mythology's famous gods, goddesses, creatures, and places. Then, conduct your own research to learn more, and record the new information in the chart.

Sample Answers

<p>Mount Olympus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the home of the Olympian gods • created after the epic battle between the young Olympian gods and the Titans 	<p>Zeus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lord of the sky, chief god of the Olympians • married to Hera • symbol is the lightning bolt • led revolt against his father Kronos 	<p>Poseidon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • god of the sea, horses, and earthquakes • can be calm or violent • brothers are Zeus and Hades • symbol is the trident 	<p>Medusa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • was once a lovely maiden • turned into a hideous monster after Athena caught her with Poseidon • hair made up of live snakes • her gaze petrifies anyone who looks at her
<p>Ares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • god of war • proud, cruel, and strong, but not smart • bully, but truly a coward • symbols include wild boar and spear 	<p>Athena</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • goddess of war, wisdom, and useful arts • Athens is named after her • invented the chariot and loom • symbols are the owl and olive tree 	<p>Dionysus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • god of wine • born mortal, but was granted immortality by Zeus • patron god of theater and art • symbol is the grapevine 	<p>Minotaur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • half-man, half-bull • imprisoned in a maze called the Labyrinth because he caused so much destruction
<p>Hades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • god of the underworld • brothers are Zeus and Poseidon • oversees souls of the dead and all riches under the earth • guards the pit of Tartarus, the prison for Titans and monsters 	<p>Hermes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • god of merchants, travelers, thieves, and medicine • messenger of the gods • symbols are winged sandals and the caduceus (winged staff with snakes wrapped around it) 	<p>Cerberus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three-headed dog who guards the gates of the underworld • allows new spirits to enter but doesn't allow any to leave 	<p>Kronos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lord of the Titans • ruled before the Olympian gods • ate his children so they wouldn't revolt • cast into Tartarus after his children revolted