

## Summer Reading Questions

### English 7

Welcome to 7<sup>th</sup> Grade! These questions go along with your four required summer reading books, *Shabanu*, *Bound*, *The Arabian Nights*, and *Tales of the Greek Heroes*.

These questions will help you remember some important details and themes from the novels so that you will be ready to discuss them when we first meet in September. I do not, however, expect you to retell all the stories in your answers. Instead, these questions are intended as a guide for your reading.

**You will be handing in these sheets with your answers on the first day of school.**

(You may answer the questions on separate pieces of paper if you need more space, but I encourage you to answer in note form for most of the questions.)

This, your first assignment of the year, will be graded on a pass/fail basis; that is, you pass if you did it!

**If you have any questions or concerns – no matter how small – please feel free to call Mrs. Hough (rhymes with tough, but don't let that scare you) at 508-540-8940.**

*Shabanu* by Suzanne Fisher Staples

This novel describes the life of a young girl who grows up in Pakistan. Make a list of adjectives that describe Shabanu at different parts of the novel (the beginning, the middle, and the end).

BEGINNING (from the start of the novel to the sale of Guluband):

MIDDLE (from the sale of Guluband to the marriage of Phulan):

END (from the marriage of Phulan to the end):

***Bound*** by Donna Jo Napoli

This is a Chinese version of the Cinderella myth. Re-familiarize yourself with the European version (but not necessarily the Disney version!); then, make a list that compares (shows how the two versions are similar) and contrasts (shows how the two versions are different) the two tales. Try to find at least five of each.

SIMILARITIES:

DIFFERENCES:

## *Tales of the Greek Heroes* by Roger Lancelyn Green

Some of you will already be familiar with the tales in this book. For others, this information will be new. There are just a few questions I want you to answer in written form. I don't want you to feel that you must memorize all stories, characters, and creatures in the Greek Mythology, but I do want you to feel comfortable using this book as a reference as we continue our study of other mythologies and literature later in the year.

To that end, I am giving you a guide to the reading. **I suggest that you simply underline or highlight in your text passages that seem important to you.** You could also write identifying words in the margins to help you find these passages later. Use this guide to help point you in the right directions; you may also underline anything else that seems significant to you.

At the back of the book, you will find a list of the major gods (their Greek and Roman names). It may be useful to write down their realms next to their names. (For example: Hades: God of the Underworld.)

**The guide that follows directs you toward important information in the book. Don't worry if you can't find everything here. This is a guide, not a test ☺.**

**At the end of the guide is a list of a few questions that I want you to answer in just a few complete sentences.**

### Chapter 1 "The Coming of the Immortals"

- Most of the major gods are mentioned in this chapter. Underline their names and realms.
- The Muses and the Titans are also mentioned here.

### Chapter 2 "Hermes and Apollo"

- The variety of Creation stories are in this chapter (Golden Age, Silver Age and Clay men).
- Silenus, a lyre and Pan are also introduced in this chapter.

### Chapter 3 "The Story of Prometheus"

- What did Prometheus give mankind?
- How are Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus characterized?
- What is the story of Athena's birth?
- The story of Pandora's box is also in this chapter.

### Chapter 4 "How Zeus and Hermes Went Visiting"

- This chapter describes Zeus' plan to decide whether or not mankind merits destruction. You needn't underline anything here.
- There is also a flood story here, similar to the story of Noah's ark.

### Chapter 5 "Typhon the Terrible"

- Who is Typhon? What natural phenomenon do you think he represents?

### Chapter 6 "The Adventures of Dionysus"

- This chapter contains the story of King Midas.
- It also describes in more detail the character of Dionysus. What is he the god of?

Chapter 7 “Perseus the Gorgon Slayer”

- Underline the name of Perseus’ mother and grandfather.
- Be sure you understand why Perseus is sent on his quest to kill the Gorgon, Medusa.
- Other characters appear here: Andromeda, the Grey Sisters.

Chapter 8 “The birth of Heracles”

- Take note of the unusual circumstances of Heracles’ birth. What is his first feat of valor?

Chapter 9 “The Choice of Heracles”

- What do Virtue and Vice offer Heracles?
- Why does Heracles kill his sons?

Chapter 10 “The Beginning of the Labors”

- As you read this chapter, just take note of the first 8 labors. What are they? (The first is the Nemean Lion, for example.)

Chapter 11 “The Story of Admentus” and Chapter 12 “The Wandering of Heracles”

- Underline a definition of the Three Fates
- Keep taking note of the next two labors mentioned.

Chapter 13 “The Golden Apples and the Hound of Hell”

- Note the last two labors Heracles performs.
- Other characters or places you might take note of: Atlas, Cerberus, Tartarus, Tantalus, and Sisyphus.

Chapter 14 “The Adventures of Theseus”

- Note who helps Theseus defeat the Minotaur.
- What is a Minotaur?
- Other characters you might take note of: Daedalus and Icarus

Chapter 15 “The Quest of the Golden Fleece”

- Who helps Jason? What is his quest?
- The story of Orpheus is told briefly in this chapter. What is it?
- What are Harpies?
- Who is Medea?

Chapter 16 “The Return of the Argonauts”

- What are Sirens?
- Who is Talos?

Chapter 17 “Meleager and Atalanta”

- The Fates are mentioned on p. 229. Who are they?

Chapter 18 “The First Fall of Troy”

- No questions

Chapter 19 “The Battle of the Giants”

- How is Heracles killed?

### **Questions to Answer (in note form)**

1. The bulk of the story in this book deals with the tales of the heroes (and heroines) most notably Hercules, but also Persues, Theseus, Jason, and Atalanta. What qualities do they have that make them heroes? What flaws are in each of their characters?
2. What is the role of the various “monsters” or “fantastical creatures” in Greek mythology? What function do they serve in the stories?
3. How do the gods reflect mankind? What qualities do the gods share with mankind (both good and bad ones)?
4. Many of our discussions in English and Humanities during 7<sup>th</sup> grade will revolve around great philosophical questions, including, “Who am I?”, “How do we live?”, “Is there life after death?”, and “Where do we come from?”. How do you think these stories might have helped ancient Greeks answer these questions?