

2009

Riordan, Rick. *The Lightning Thief*. Hyperion, 2005.

SUMMARY:

Percy Jackson has had strange things happen to him all his life. The latest being his math teacher's transformation into a monster, whom Percy has to kill unless he wants to be killed first. Percy's mother takes him to a special summer camp, but they have to fight a minotaur in order to get there. During the fight, Percy's mother disappears. Once at camp, Percy learns that his best friend is a satyr, his father is a Greek god (making him a demigod), and Zeus believes that he, Percy, stole his master lightning bolt. Percy must set out on a life-threatening, modern-day quest to find Zeus' bolt before Zeus declares war and destroys all of mankind.

QUESTIONS:

Why do you think Percy is the one chosen to be framed?

How would you describe Grover and Annabeth? What are their special abilities?

Why did Percy's mom marry Gabe?

What do you think of Camp Half-Blood? What do you think of Mr. D.?

Which Greek god are you most like? Explain.

What do you think of the way the Underworld is run? How do you feel about the characters that populate it? Do you think that they are all "bad"?

Why do you think Zeus refuses to believe that Cronus might be regaining his strength? Do you think there are other things that the gods might refuse to admit to as well?

What do you think about the idea that the Greek gods can play with humans and interfere with our world the way they do in the book (and in ancient Greek times)? Why do you think the ancient Greeks would believe that their gods had so much power to cause such havoc in the world?

JOURNAL STARTER:

A weakness of mine is _____. I could turn it into an advantage by . . .

ACTIVITIES:

Create bookmarks and record names of characters as they are encountered in the book.

Design T-shirts for Camp Half-Blood.

Design a flag that you could use to play Capture the Flag.

Draw characters and structures described in the novel.

Learn the rules for pinochle and Capture the Flag. Play these games with your class.

Research prominent figures in Greek Mythology.

In this book, modern-day events are said to be caused by Greek gods. Write a fictional story about how a current event could have been caused by a mythological experience.

INTEREST LEVELS: Grades 4-8.

BOOK TALK:

What would you do if monsters are always trying to hurt you? What would you do if you find out that you aren't who you think you are? Percy Jackson has always had to deal with life being a little odd, but when his math teacher tries to kill him and his mother disappears after a fight with a minotaur, Percy learns that his long-lost father is really one of the ancient Greek gods and, therefore, he is a demigod. Percy goes to Camp Half-Blood to learn the skills he will need to survive in the world outside camp. Unfortunately, Percy is accused of stealing Zeus's master lightning bolt and must leave camp to find it before Zeus starts World War III. In this modern-day quest, Percy will have to learn to trust his friends and his instincts, travel across the country, and fight monsters the likes of which haven't been seen since Ancient Greece.

READ-ALIKES:

Riordan, Rick. *The Sea of Monsters: Book 2*. Miramax, 2006.

Riordan, Rick. *The Titan's Curse: Book 3*. Miramax, 2007.

Riordan, Rick. *The Battle of the Labyrinth: Book 4*. Hyperion, 2008.

Collins, Suzanne. *Gregor the Overlander*. Scholastic, 2004.

Farmer, Nancy. *Sea of Trolls*. Scholastic, 2005.

Funke, Cornelia. *Inkheart*. Scholastic, 2005.

Funke, Cornelia. *Inkspell*. Chicken House Ltd, 2006.

Osborne, Mary Pope. *Tales from the Odyssey*. Hyperion, 2002-2004 (Six Volumes)

RELATED WEBSITES:

Rick Riordan: <http://www.rickriordan.com>

A Teacher's Guide to Percy Jackson: <http://tinyurl.com/4918pb>

Literature Circle Questions: <http://tinyurl.com/54yqy9>

OTHER RECOGNITION:

Winner of a Children's Choice Award in each of the following states and region: Arizona, 2008; Connecticut, 2008; Florida, 2008; Hawaii, 2008; Massachusetts, 2008; Missouri, 2008; Nebraska, 2008; Pacific Northwest, 2008; Pennsylvania, 2008; Oklahoma, 2008; Utah, 2006; Virginia, 2008.