



## Summer Reading – English II Pre-AP (Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*)

Using Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*, you will complete questions on the following sections:

- **Part Four – The Heroes of the Trojan War – Chs. 13, 14 (The Trojan War and The Fall of Troy)**
- **Part Five – The Great Families of Mythology – Chs. 17, 18 (The House of Atreus and The Royal House of Thebes)**
- **Complete the chart on the Greek warriors.**
- **Part Seven – The Mythology of the Norsemen – Ch. 23 (The Norse Gods; The Creation)**
- **You will also make a chart on the gods' and goddesses' roles in the Trojan War and make a chart of the important Norse gods and goddesses.)**

**\*\*\*Answer all questions in complete sentences. The final copy of your questions must be computer-generated in size 11 or 12. You will also computer generate the charts. This assignment is a major test grade and questions are due on the first A or B day of school.**

Part 4 – The Heroes of the Trojan War – Ch. 13, p. 185

1. In a short paragraph explain the judgment of Paris.
2. Why do you think Paris chose Aphrodite over Hera and Athena?
3. Why did Zeus not want to get involved?

### The Trojan War

4. To what oath did each of Helen's suitors swear?
5. How did Paris break the sacred bond between guest and host?
6. When Menelaus called upon all Greek chieftains, which 2 did not show up? Explain how each one attempted to shirk his duty and how their deception is discovered. Why does Achilles' mother Thetis want to keep her son from the war?
7. What role does the soothsayer Calchas play as the Greek army is ready to set sail?
8. What does Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter and his lie to his wife reveal about him?
9. How do both Agamemnon and Achilles both show a flaw in their character in the incident over Chryseis and Briseis?
10. Both Hector and Achilles know they would die before Troy was taken, but both are resolved to fight. What does this reveal about these men?

11. **Computer-generate your own chart to show the role of the gods and goddesses in the Trojan War. Whose side was each on and why, if relevant. How does their intervention affect the outcome of battles and the war in general? Include the anthropomorphic traits of the gods and goddesses.**

(Term: **anthropomorphism**: attributing human emotions, feelings to the gods and goddesses) Ex: Hera – jealous and vengeful; hates Paris; wants Troy destroyed

12. What role does old Nestor play in advising the Greeks as they are about to give up?  
13. Find and copy the simile used to describe the Greeks as they flee back to their ships. (In the original epic by Homer, these are very long similes called Homeric similes.)

14. How does Achilles' dearest friend Patroclus behave heroically? How does Achilles' anger (wrath) reveal his foolish pride – his hubris?

15. How does Athena trick Hector and thus bring about his defeat and death?

16. After Achilles has abused the dead Hector, how do old King Priam's words end the wrath of Achilles?

17. **\*\*\*Complete the chart in your packet on the Greek and Trojan leaders and warriors and their roles in the Trojan War.**

\*The Iliad by Homer ends at this point before the fall of Troy.

#### Chapter 14 – The Fall of Troy, p. 210

18. What is an 'Achilles heel'? Why is he vulnerable in this particular spot? How does this term relate to Achilles' impending death?

19. Why does Ajax kill himself? Why do the Greeks not honor him with a funeral pyre?

20. What does the creation of the Trojan horse reveal about Odysseus?

21. What role does Simon, the Greek who was left behind, play in the demise of Troy?

22. What last sacrifice does Andromache have to endure before being taken captive?

#### Part V: The Great Families of Mythology

#### Chapter 17 – The House of Atreus, p. 247

\*These families and their lineage are known in literature as **"tragic" or "ill-fated"** families. Because one of their ancestors committed a wicked deed, his descendants were all punished as well. A curse is upon the descendants, causing them to sin as well and bring suffering or death to their innocent relatives as well as to the guilty ones.

1. Explain how Tantalus and Niobe fit the definition of a "tragic" family.

2. Explain how Agamemnon and his children fit the definition of a "tragic" family.

3. Why does Queen Clytemnestra murder Agamemnon when he returns home?

4. Summarize the story of Electra and Orestes and how the curse on the House of Atreus ends.

#### Chapter 18 – The House of Thebes, p. 266

5. How do Cadmus and Harmonia cause sorrow for their children and grandchildren?

6. How does Oedipus become king of Thebes?

7. What was the "riddle of the Sphinx" and the answer to the riddle?

8. What irony lies in Creon's news that the plague would be stayed only if the murderer of King Laius were punished?
9. What does the wise prophet Teiresias reveal to Odysseus?
10. Why are Jocasta and all of Oedipus' children a cursed "tragic" family?
11. Briefly explain the conflict between Eteocles and Polyneices.
12. How does the House of Oedipus, the last of their royal family of Thebes, come to an end?

Part Seven: The Mythology of the Norsemen – Introduction, p. 314

1. Using a dictionary, to what countries or area of Europe do we trace Norsemen and Norse mythology?
2. Describe the Norse conception of Asgard, the home of their gods.
3. How did the heroes and heroines gain a seat in Valhalla?
4. Explain several of the ironies of the Norse concept of heroism.
5. How did the Christian concept of Heaven differ from the Norse concept of Heaven?
6. Explain the impact of Christianity on Norse religion.
7. What is "only light in the darkness" of Norse mythology?

Ch. 23: The Norse Gods, p. 322

8. Why couldn't the Olympians of Greece be heroic to the Norsemen? What name did the Norsemen give to their gods collectively?
9. Discuss how Odin, their chief god and similar to Zeus, did not really bear any resemblance to Zeus.
10. What were the Runes and how did the Norsemen use them?
11. What roles did the Valkyries play?
12. Explain the role of Frigga, Odin's wife.
13. **Make a chart of the other important Norse gods, Balder, Thor, Freyr, Heimdall, Tyr, and the Norse goddesses. Include their characteristics, their roles, their deaths, and their importance to the Norsemen.**
14. Discuss Loki. What was he best known for? How was he eventually punished by the gods?
15. Explain the Norse version of the Creation.
16. What prophecy in the *Elder Edda* offered some hope for the Norsemen after the defeat of the gods?

