

Greek Mythology

Heroes and Demi-Gods



Book List:

1. Homer's the Iliad and the Odyssey
- Several abridged versions available
2. Percy Jackson's Greek Gods by Rick Riordan
3. Percy Jackson's Greek Heroes by Rick Riordan
4. Percy Jackson and the Olympians series by, Rick Riordan
5. Treasury of Greek Mythology by, Donna Jo Napoli
6. Demigods and Monsters; Your Favorite Authors on Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series

Website References:

<https://www.greekmythology.com/>

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/greek-mythology>

<https://greekgodsandgoddesses.net/heroes/>

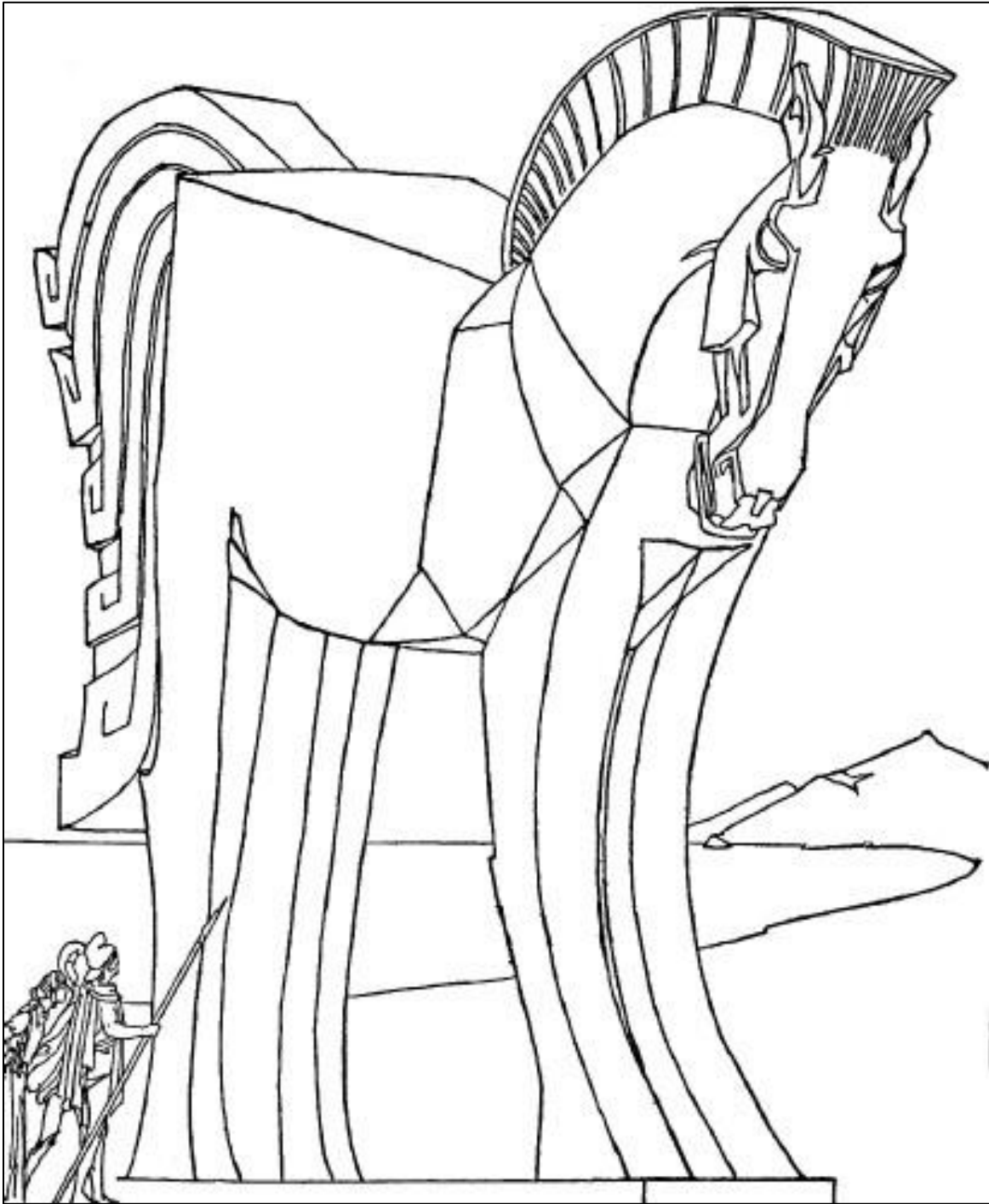
Achilles



The most famous hero during the Trojan war, Achilles was practically invincible. When he was born, his mother, Thetis, held him by the heel and dipped Achilles into the river Styx, making him immortal. Achilles commanded fifty ships which contained fifty Myrmidons each during the start of the Trojan war. He killed Hector, prince of Troy, but was finally defeated by Paris, Hector's brother who shot an arrow into Achilles' heel, the only vulnerable spot on the hero.

The term "Achilles heel", meaning one's weakness, comes from this story.

Odysseus



Odysseus, said to be the great-grandson of the god Hermes, hid in the Trojan Horse and helped defeat the army of Troy. But his story doesn't truly begin until his way home from the war. His journey, or *Odyssey*, is faced with many perils including fierce storms, a Cyclops, a sorceress and Sirens. Home in Ithaca, Odysseus' wife and son waited for over a decade and almost didn't recognize him when they were finally reunited.

Perseus

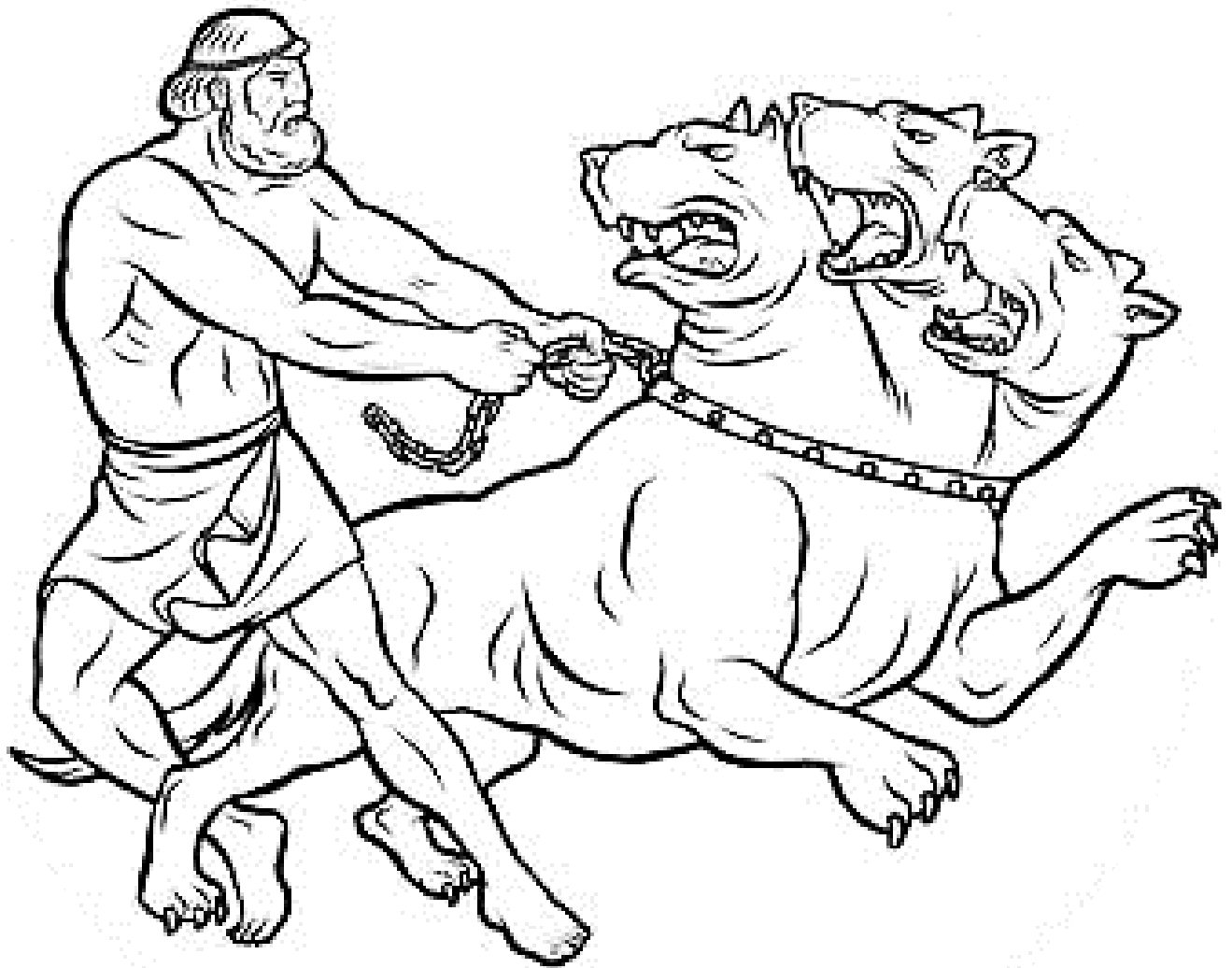


Demigod son of Zeus, Perseus slayed the snake-haired Gorgon named Medusa who was said to be able to turn men to stone with one look.

On his way back from Medusa's lair, Perseus found Andromeda, who had been chained to a rock in the sea with a sea monster as punishment for her mother's pride. When Perseus saw Andromeda, he fell in love and killed the monster that guarded her, freeing the princess.

Perseus went on to rule the kingdom of Mycenae with Andromeda by his side.

Heracles



Son of Zeus, named for Hera, Heracles was given Twelve Labors which would purify him of his sins and grant him immortality. The Twelve Labors were:

1. Slay the Nemean Lion
2. Kill the nine-headed Lernaean Hydra
3. Capture the Golden Hide of Artemis
4. Capture the Erymanthian Boar
5. Clean the Augean stables in a single day
6. Slay the Stymphalian Birds
7. Capture the Cretan Bull
8. Steal the Mares of Diomedes
9. Obtain the girdle of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons
10. Obtain the cattle of the monster Geryon
11. Take the apples of the Hesperides
12. Capture and bring back CERBERUS, the Guardian of the Underworld

Theseus



Theseus, son of Poseidon, defeated the Minotaur, half bull/ half man, who lived in the Labyrinth. King Minos of Crete, fed the Minotaur seven young men and seven young women every seven years. Theseus volunteered to be one of the seven men and with the help of Ariadne, the king's daughter, he found his way through the Labyrinth and killed the Minotaur.

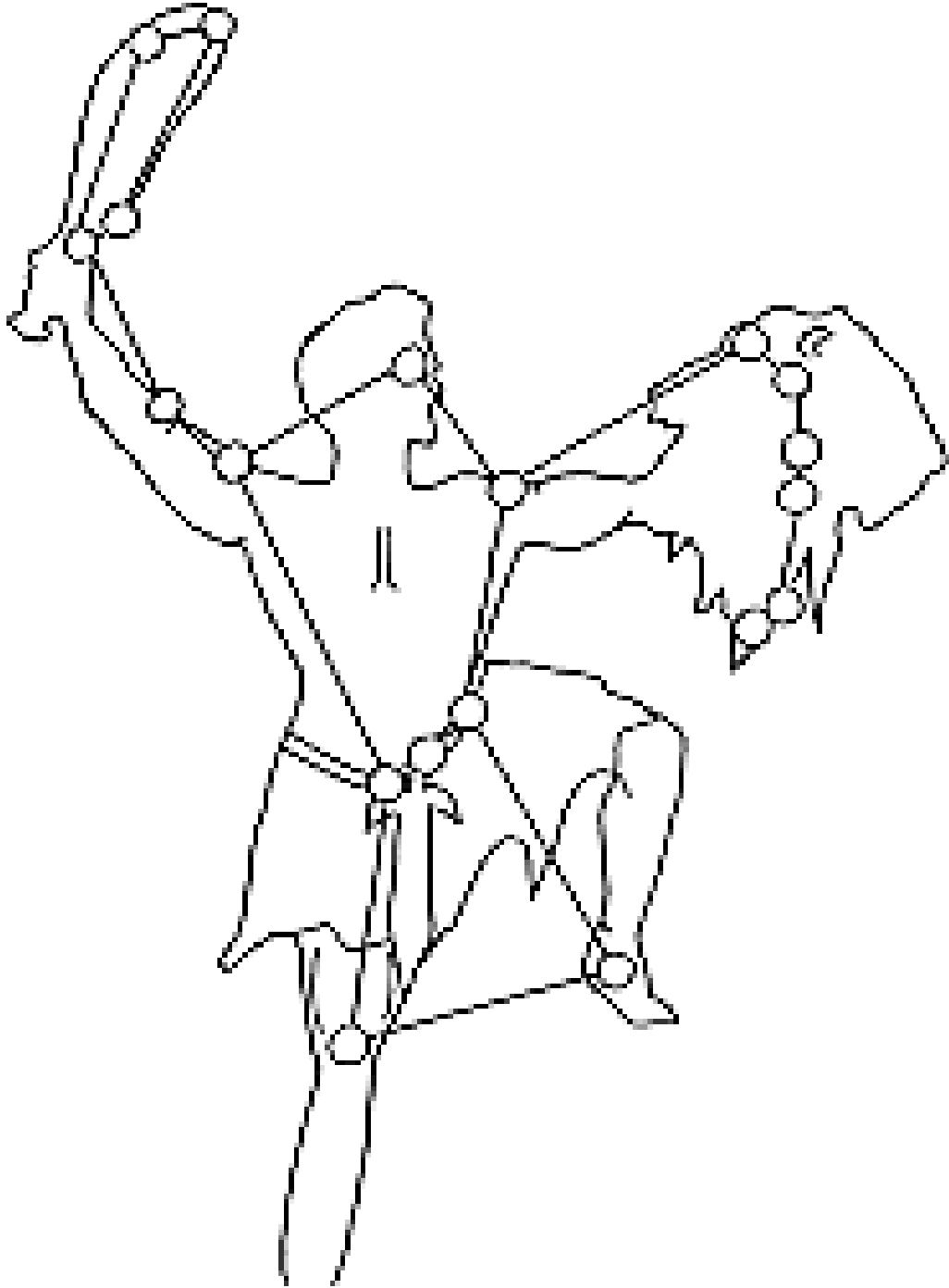
Theseus became king of Athens. The Aegean Sea is named after Theseus' human father, King Aegeus.

Orpheus



The son of a Muse, Orpheus was gifted with musical talent so amazing, it brought his enemies to tears. Orpheus' songs even moved Hades, god of the Underworld enough to let him take the love of his life, Eurydice back to the mortal world after she had been killed by a snakebite. Hades told them, however, to not look back. Orpheus, excited, looked back and Eurydice vanished.

Orion



Orion was one of the only men ever chosen to join Artemis's hunt. He angered Gaia by boasting of how well he could hunt, and she sent a giant scorpion to kill him. Artemis grieved his death by asking Zeus to honor Orion in the stars. He obliged, but also made a constellation of the giant scorpion to chase Orion across the sky for eternity.

Jason



After being trained by Chiron, Jason was sent on a quest to retrieve the Golden Fleece. He set out on a ship full of Heroes called the Argonauts. He faced many adventures during this quest, including falling in love with the sorceress and princess, Medea. Finally, he was able to fight the dragon guarding the Golden Fleece, which was easy with the help of Medea.

Greek Mythology - Heroes and Demigods

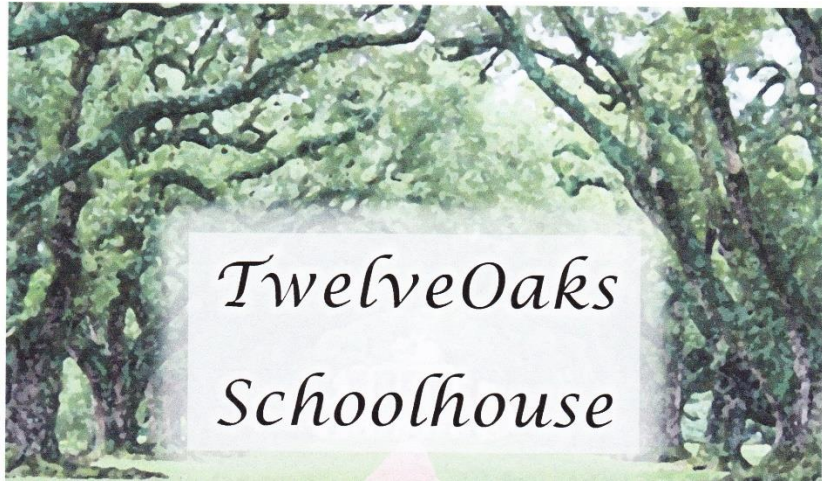
Discussion/ Essay Questions

1. What qualified someone to be a demigod?
2. What was the Trojan War about?
3. Why did Heracles complete the Twelve Labors?
4. Why was Orpheus such a talented musician?
5. Who were the Argonauts?

Extra Activities

1. Read the detailed story of one of these heroes and write a report.
2. Make a DIY Trojan horse from craft sticks, cardboard...
3. Watch the Disney movie, Hercules. During the song, "Zero to Hero", see if you can spot each of the Twelve Labors. Compare the Disney story to the original Greek myth.
4. Research constellations. Go to a place away from the city lights to star gaze.
5. Bring out your inner Orpheus and sing some karaoke.





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