

Literature Circle Questions

Use these questions and the activities that follow to get more out of the experience of reading *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan.

1. Describe what kind of student Percy Jackson is. What troubles does he have in school?
2. What is Percy's relationship with his mother? Why does he think she has bad luck?
3. What does Percy discover about the Greek gods at Camp Half-Blood? What do they have to do with the camp?
4. Why is Percy more excited than scared about his upcoming guest to the Underworld? What other feelings does he have about his assignment?
5. What clues do Percy and his friends have that all is not right with "Auntie Em"? Why do you think they overlook the clues?
6. What does Percy's fight with Echidna reveal about his character? What new things does he discover about himself?
7. The god Ares says he loves America. He calls it "the best place since Sparta." What does he mean? Do you agree with his assessment of America? Why? Why not?
8. At the Lotus Casino, Percy realizes that unless he gets out quickly, he will "...stay here, happy forever, playing games forever, and soon I'd forget my mom, and my quest, and maybe my own name. I'd be playing Virtual Rifleman with groovy Disco Darrin forever." What critique is the author offering of modern life? Do you agree with it?
9. When describing the effects of Mist, Chiron says, "Remarkable, really, the lengths humans will go to fit things into their version of reality." How is this true in the novel? In Greek mythology?
10. When Percy finally meets his father, Poseidon seems distant and hard to read. Percy says that he is actually glad about this. "If he'd tried to apologize, or told me he loved me, or even smiled—that would have felt fake. Like a human dad, making some lame excuse for not being around." Do you agree with Percy?
11. How does the last line of the prophecy—*you shall fail to save what matters most in the end*—come true? What do you think of this ending? Did Percy make the right choice?

12. Throughout the story, Percy is troubled by frightening dreams. In what ways do those dreams increase the tension in the story? Is there menace completely resolved by the end of the story?
13. After her return from the quest, Annabeth resolves to try again to live with her father and her stepfamily. Do you think they will all get along better now? Why? Why not? What do you predict will happen?
14. In the end of the book, do you sympathize at all with Luke's feelings of betrayal? Is there anything you can relate to about his point of view?
15. Percy's learning difficulties become strengths in a different context. What seem to be attention problems enable him to be aware of all sides of attack during a battle. While he struggles to read English, he masters ancient Greek almost effortlessly. What skills are valued most in today's society? How might students who struggle today have been successful in a different moment in history?

Note: These questions are keyed to Bloom's Taxonomy as follows: Knowledge: 1-3; Comprehension: 4-5; Application: 6-7; Analysis: 8-10; Synthesis: 11-12; Evaluation: 13-14.

Activities

1. Imagine you have just discovered you are a half-blood. What cabin do you think you will end up in at Camp Half-Blood? What are the possibilities? Write a fictional essay describing your arrival and the discovery of your true parentage.
2. This book is the first in a series. Luke is still at large, Cronos is growing stronger, and Percy is about to step out into the world as the acknowledged son of Poseidon. What will happen next? Like the Oracle, make four predictions about the next book. What will happen in it? Share your predictions and the clues that support them, and create a chart showing what you think are the most likely upcoming events.
3. World War II is revealed in the book to actually have been triggered by an epic battle between the gods. How can a modern event be explained by the gods? Pick a current event—an earthquake, a battle, or even a surprising celebrity love affair—and explain how the gods were really behind it. You can present your explanations as a television newscast!